

2/23/70

Dear Mary (Paul, Gary),

I have been reading the Donner, with a mixture of disbelief, wonder and satisfaction. It is of this I write, as I'll explain. I've gone through "12:28".

When I have something like this to read, I generally do it twixt and tween other things, which tends to interfere with continuity but also takes no time from work. I rarely have time to make notes while I'm reading, so I mark the books up as I go. For example, when I pick it up during the couple of months she works, I'll have something with me to read if she is delayed. Or if I get to a good place to stop work and have a little while before supper, etc.

You know her and perhaps some of the other people, so I may ask you a few questions as I go through it.

First of all, did she tell you why she wrote the book, what impelled her to do this, and at a time when all the trade indications were no book on this subject could be a big success, if it could break even? Of course, she could expect enough Dallas sale on this to make it worth her while. But, what I am hinting at is, with her a partner in a public-relations business, do you think the side benefits of the book are what provided her inspiration? She is even more sycophantic than Bishop.

My early impressions are that her major sources were Curry, Fritz and Hill. In not this order. Her description of Hill is absolutely fascinating. This is a man with no personal life and no desire for any. Do you know anything of his politics, religion or associations? I find myself, from this brief characterization, wondering if he is a follower of some fundamentalist church, like Margis'. She goes so far out of her way to laud Fritz (what she uses isn't butter), like giving him credit for finding the rifle (Weitzman carefully omitted, Fritz only one named by name), it is or should be for anyone with scruple at all, at least embarrassing. Or does she know this little?

I really enjoyed a little slip she made. Criticizing Lane for saying no one saw Oswald leave and citing, of all things, the Worrall affidavit, she then says identically the same thing, that Oswald left the building "unnoticed". The brief contact I've had with the book leads me to believe she doesn't have the 26, if the report itself. She cites a selection only of the Decker affidavits, and then as unquestioned fact. It is clear she has not done much homework. Which is what one would expect, more of a woman, with a public relations business.

Hill has always interested me, more than most of the police. From her writing he interests me even more. I wonder if she knows him from their days on the papers. In any event, if he wanted to be "where the action is", he sure was.

Sincerely,